



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 7 December 1967



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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Economic Claims: Hanoi's latest attempt to show that bombings have not disrupted its economy is a claim of increasing output by regional industries.

According to Reuters, the North Vietnamese news agency on 5 December said that regional industries under central control increased their output of some commodities by 1 to 13 percent during the first nine months of 1967. The report said that many "important industrial branches" have gradually increased in size despite the bombings.

The industries cited are probably the local plants which were to be built or expanded in dispersed locations throughout the country, according to the 1966-67 plan drafted in response to the bombing. Hanoi gave high priority to these plants in order to enable regions to be economically self-sufficient and to guard against disruption of output by central plants.

Regional plants may have improved their performance during 1967, but the implication that all is well in industry is almost certainly false. The central plants--including the handful of modern plants--have been severely disrupted by the bombings. Even if the regional plants have performed up to plan, which seems highly unlikely, they apparently have been unable to make up the drop in the supply of nonmilitary industrial goods from prebombing levels. Imports of such goods have been increasing steadily since the bombings began.

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New Peace Proposal: The World Federation of United Nations Associations has announced a new proposal aimed at bringing peace to Vietnam. The proposal calls for the establishment of a date to end the war, the ending of the bombing of North Vietnam on the same date, and five-power talks to organize negotiations or a peace conference. Copies of the proposal dated 28 November have been sent by the association's president, Ales Bebler, to the US, North Vietnam, and the five countries named for the talks, Britain, Russia, India, Canada, and Poland.

Several months ago, Bebler called on the same five powers simply to hold consultations aimed at bridging the gap between the peace conditions demanded by Hanoi and Washington. Little response to that proposal was generated and it apparently was dropped after the Soviets voiced their objection to such a meeting. There is, moreover, nothing which would indicate that Bebler's latest effort will be any more successful.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Appeal to Senator Fulbright: Hanoi in a broadcast on 5 December to American Servicemen in South Vietnam carried what was alleged to be a letter from a captured pilot to Senator Fulbright. After recounting his capture, the pilot appealed to the senator, claiming that "many prisoners here rely upon your good will, prestige, and high position in our government to try to find a suitable solution to quickly end this problem."

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More Hanoi Thoughts on "War Crimes Tribunal": In a broadcast on 6 December, Hanoi issued a lengthy report on the outcome of the recently concluded second session of the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal. The broadcast reported statements by Americans who had attended or participated in the trial. Stokely Carmichael, called "a leader of the black people's movement in the US and a member of the tribunal," was quoted as condemning the US "for forcing black Americans to go to South Vietnam to be used as cannon fodder." He pointed out that the American leaders had committed "double genocide, that is, the murder of the Vietnamese people as well as the black people."

Dave Dellinger, another American member of the tribunal, also appealed to the world's people and the people of America "to unite their actions so as to step up their struggle against the war of aggression and the crimes of genocide committed by the US ruling circles in Vietnam."

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